



Indigenous Approaches to Wellness: Introduction to a Themed Call for Products of Community-Engaged Projects Focused on Aboriginal & Indigenous Health

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Indigenous¹ people are strong and resilient with thousands of years of culture, tradition, ancestral knowledge, and holistic practices. However, centuries of attempts to eradicate, relocate, assimilate, and appropriate Indigenous people and their identities and cultures have brought about persistent health inequities as well as challenges such as lingering racism, discrimination, and microaggressions; mistrust of educational institutions and Western health systems; widespread poverty; unemployment; geographic isolation; and intergenerational trauma stemming from colonization. Nevertheless, *we are still here*; we are still here and experiencing a revitalization and resumption of our cultures, traditional practices, languages, and knowledge. Through Indigenous innovations, economic breakthroughs, trusting partnerships with allies, self-determination, and a renewed adherence to core cultural value systems, we are growing healthier and stronger and are creating a future where our children, grandchildren, and generations yet to be born will thrive.

Advancement toward healthier futures can be attributed, at least in part, to discoveries made in the research process. However, Indigenous and Aboriginal populations have not fully reaped the benefits of health research due to the aforementioned trust issues as well as real and documented harm inflicted by the research process and Western, academic-based researchers. Such injuries have diminished individual participation and community approval of health research despite having, in general, lower health status than other populations. Historically, research and scholarship with Indigenous people has been conducted by outside, generally non-Indigenous

¹ We use the term "Indigenous" to refer to American Indian, Alaska Native, Aboriginal, and First Nations people.

² For the sake of brevity, we use the corresponding author's name, however, in each case it is intended to convey the whole partnership.

“experts”, with marginal involvement by persons affected by the issues of focus. This approach often results in scholarship with little relevance or application to the community, is frequently deficit-focused rather than strengths-based, and can increase the potential for harm and decrease participant and community benefit. In the past couple of decades, however, community-based participatory approaches to scholarship have been opening doors in Indigenous and Aboriginal communities worldwide. The approach of community engagement in the process of discovery resonates with Indigenous core value systems that are relationship-centered.

The five products published in our themed call for community-engaged projects focusing on Aboriginal & Indigenous health provide the reader or observer with examples of innovative engagement and extend the reach of community-based participatory work in Indigenous and Aboriginal communities. The products cover significant issues faced by Aboriginal and Indigenous men (re/discovering of traditional and contemporary roles, Carry; engaging and supporting Aboriginal men in fatherhood, StGeorge; and raising awareness of Native men’s health, Lachapelle), and culturally appropriate approaches to talking about cancer in Aboriginal and Indigenous communities (strengths based personal narratives, Cueva; and a theater script that provides a model for how to discuss cancer screening with Native people, Cueva). Each propose best practices or solutions that are ethical and respectful, are locally owned, and that provide real time benefit to the individual and/or community. These products provide us with insights about the use of community-based participatory research by emerging Indigenous and allied health research leaders and improving engagement of Indigenous or Aboriginal participants in the process of community engaged scholarship. The forms of the product deserve attention as well. Several contributions capture the reverence for oral tradition and narrative (videos), while others are packaged as easily disseminated fact sheets/posters, tools, or websites. All are immediately accessible, free to the public, locally sanctioned as verified by the CES4Health application process, and all have the peer-review of community and academic scholars.

The products presented in this special-themed call demonstrate in multiple ways that community engagement promotes trust and respect, which then becomes the driving force for positive outcomes. Through community engagement, unique shared ideas and communication becomes an important foundation to trust and respect, in which partnership between the two can be

fostered and developed. We wish to thank each of the author teams for working through the trust issues, identifying what matters in their own communities, and creating a collaborative environment where solutions can surface and be transformed into products for achieving Indigenous and Aboriginal wellness!

Abstracts for Products Published through Themed Call on Aboriginal & Indigenous Health

Qanuqtuurniq - Finding the Balance TV Series - Episode 1: How are We as Men?"

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=2T8Z62J5>

Inuit men have experienced many changes to their way of life in just two generations. This has sometimes left Inuit men feeling lost and unsure of their place in the family and community. Their level of distress can be seen in the low school completion rates and high levels of incarceration and suicide. Men need a voice. Programs and services for men – many created and led by men – are giving them an opportunity to seek help, better understand their needs and strengths, and revive their traditions and culture. “Angutiilli qanuiliqpat? – How are we as men?,” is the first of a three-part live, public TV series, “Qanuqtuurniq – Finding the Balance,” on Inuit health and wellness issues and solutions. In this episode (now an on-line video product) viewers will see live discussions, information from the International Polar Year's Inuit Health Survey, and stories of community programs that are helping Inuit men to improve their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. Led by Inuit Tuttarvingat of the National Aboriginal Health Organization in Canada, it was broadcast in May 2009 on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network – North and in Alaska on 360North. The series was a communications and outreach project for International Polar Year aired in the Inuit language (with English captions/sub-titles) and simultaneously webcast. The goal of each episode was to engage the Inuit public (the primary audience), and others in ‘real time’ dialogue about health and wellness issues and health research, and to deliver key messages.

Awakening Choices: Colon Health, Our Stories

Corresponding Author: Melany Cueva, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

<http://ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=SLRPPDFS>

Awakening Choices: Colon Health, Our Stories is a 28-minute movie available on DVD that shares the stories of Alaska Native men and women talking about recommended colorectal cancer screening exams and wellness ways to decrease cancer risk. Yupik dolls, symbols of the old ones, guide our artistic movie journey showing us ways to keep our bodies strong and our communities healthy. Viewers can experience stories of wellness; celebrate the gift of life through the beauty of Alaska Native people's songs, dances, and culture. We learn the importance of colorectal screening through the stories of Alaska Native people. “Inspired, motivated, comfortable, relieved, encouraged, hopeful”, words expressed in response to watching the movie. Other Alaskan viewer comments: “I felt a part of the people in the movie-same fears, same relief;” “I want to go and get colon screening now.” The movie is recommended for viewers of all ages to

support community wellness. Men and women age 50 and older are especially encouraged to learn more about recommended screening exams to prevent colorectal cancer or to find colorectal cancer early when it can be best treated. The DVD also includes a 5-minute preview of the movie and a 30-second public service announcement designed for television use. A booklet and a 24-page activity guide with four interactive activities accompany the movie to support continued learning and community cancer education.

“What’s the Big Deal?” Readers’ Theatre to Inform, Inspire, and Ignite Action

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=RLK82JKB>

“What’s the Big Deal?” is a 25-minute Readers’ Theatre script was developed with and for Alaska Native and American Indian Community Health Workers and the people in their communities to provide colorectal cancer screening information, increase comfort with talking about colorectal cancer screening, and encourage people to have recommended colorectal cancer screenings. Stories from colorectal cancer survivors, their families and care givers, medical providers, and Community Health Workers were woven into the lives of six characters who use humor and story to talk about common questions, concerns, and feelings related to colorectal cancer screening. The characters include Isaac, a man in his early 50s whose father died of colorectal cancer, his wife, Beverly who has recently turned 50 and has no family history of colorectal cancer and their two children, Rita and Freddie. Additionally, the script includes Isaac’s brother, Uncle Ward and the doctor who does the colonoscopy procedures. Readers’ Theatre is the coming together of a group of people to read aloud a written conversation. “What’s the Big Deal?” can be read as part of cancer education, school presentations, community gatherings, dinner theatre, or a radio show. Community Health Workers, community members, cancer survivors, and people of all ages interested in learning more about colorectal screening are possible participants. People of all ages can support recommended colorectal screening exams. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends men and women ages 50 to 75 have colorectal screening.

Apsaalooke Upsauloouk Bucha Unnaylayda - Crow Men's Health

Corresponding Author: Paul Lachapelle, Montana State University

<http://ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=DB87TJFF>

Apsaalooke Upsauloouk Bucha Unnaylayda - Crow Men's Health, is an educational film that presents narratives by Crow men directed toward raising awareness of men’s health and preventative treatment options and increasing the participation of adult Native American men in preventative health screenings. Whether they talk about it or not, health is a very important part of all Crow men’s lives. A modern lifestyle of fast-food, sedentary lifestyles, and a general lack of interest in traditional cultural knowledge and practice have jeopardized the overall health of Native American men. In this video, Crow men discuss their feelings about the barriers to health, wellness and health prevention, and the Crow Men’s Health Ride. Footage of the 2008 ride to the Four Dances Vision Site acknowledging the importance of health and recognizing the young Crow men who sacrificed their lives in the eighteenth century by riding their horses over a cliff in order to save the Tribe from smallpox is included. This film is intended to be used as a resource for Crow men and all Native American men for education and inspiration about men’s health. The target audience is Crow men, all enrolled Crow members, Native American men across

Montana and the United States, and health professionals involved in Native American health issues.

Making Positive Resources to Engage Aboriginal Men/Fathers

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=WB2F78F2>

Making Positive Resources to Engage Aboriginal Men/Fathers is a project intended to engage and support Aboriginal men with positive photographic images of Aboriginal men in fatherhood roles. The product is a series of posters with photographs of Aboriginal fathers and their children. Examples of the numerous photographs include a Dad kicking a football with his son, Dad playing in the sandpit, reading a book to his kids or doing cultural activities with his children. The photographs are captioned with positive text about fathers - Our Kids Need Dads Who: Stay Strong Smile, Take an Interest, Be There and Listen, and posters include artwork representative of country. The product was created to be displayed at day care centres, community organizations, court houses, health centres and other places where men are likely to see them. The posters were created for Australian Aboriginal communities in Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, the Tiwi Islands and Yarraba in Queensland, Wreck Bay in New South Wales, and Hobart in Tasmania, and distributed to each household in these communities. However, they have a wide appeal to other Aboriginal communities and all those who view the posters in public settings.

Abstracts for Other Indigenous Health-Related Products Published through CES4Health

Engaging the Underserved: Personal Accounts of Communities on Mental Health Needs for Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Corresponding Author: Natalia Deeb-Sossa, University of California at Davis

<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=3SZ745JK>

The UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities (CRHD), with funding from the California Department of Mental Health, collected accounts with communities underserved by mental health services. These community members identified mental health and health needs, concerns, strengths, assets and resources, as well as developed recommendations for prevention and early-intervention programs. Using a community engagement process, we interviewed key informants and conducted focus groups with Latinas/os (including agricultural workers), African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and other underserved groups in 10 counties across California. Participants identified social determinants such as poverty and discrimination as major factors affecting mental health and the quality of life of those living with mental illness and recommended that the improvement of social conditions be a key objective of prevention efforts. County, state and national mental health policy makers will need to consider delivering not only traditional mental health services, but also services that address the inequities and social exclusion experienced by members of underserved communities. The reports that summarize the community voices through this project is appropriate for use by any health policy maker, health provider, advocate or community member, as evidence of the need for equity and full inclusion of vulnerable populations as measured by access to necessary quality services that promote mental health, wellness, resiliency, and recovery in these communities.

Turtle Finding Fact Sheet: The Role of the Treatment Provider in Aboriginal Women's Healing from Illicit Drug Abuse

Corresponding Author: Colleen Dell, University of Saskatchewan

<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=Z3KNXKHD>

Our research identifies key skills and traits for service providers working with Aboriginal women that assists them with re-claiming their cultural identity. The "Turtle Finding Fact Sheet: The Role of the Treatment Provider in Aboriginal Women's Healing from Illicit Drug Abuse" was created to disseminate and commence discussion on this initial finding from our community-based research project in Canada. The study overall focused on the role of identity and stigma in the healing journeys of criminalized Aboriginal women from illicit drug abuse. Our team is committed to sharing its finding with the community from which the information was collected—workers in the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP). The Fact Sheet is based on a sample of interviews with substance abuse treatment providers, and was verified with women in treatment and who have completed treatment. In recent years, the addictions literature has increased its attention toward the importance of the therapeutic alliance between treatment providers and clients(1), although understanding specific to Aboriginal women remains limited. Identity reclamation is central to women's healing journeys and treatment providers have an influential role. This finding is framed in the fact sheet within the cultural understanding of the Seven Teachings of the Grandfathers(2). The fact sheet (8.5x11) has been distributed to the over 700 NNADAP workers, and is also available at no cost in two poster size formats. It is appropriate for anyone providing services to Aboriginal women requiring addictions treatment.

Join the Conversation! Joignez-vous à la discussion! Ne àwok làgà! Pi-Kakeekiton! Pe-mamiskota kista! Ne àwok nàgà! Nuhÿhel yanÿàti horîâæîh dé, nÿba hoæâ si t'óho lósi!

Corresponding Author: Colleen Dell, University of Saskatchewan

<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=JTDLMRCB>

It is well understood from lived experience and research that peoples' stories are their identities. The commonly recognized story of Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) in Canada highlights the impacts of colonization on traditional ways of life, including multi-generational losses of cultural practices, language and land. A part of this story is the problematic use of substances resulting from colonial government practices, such as residential schools. Grounded in Indigenous (1, 2) and community-based approaches (3, 4) to knowledge gathering, our team produced a DVD and accompanying Journey Magnet and Exercise Sheet to share individuals' inspirational yet historically silenced stories about the role of Aboriginal culture in healing from addictions. The goal for these stories, in the form of these products, is to serve as a catalyst for a strength-based provincial conversation (i.e., exchange of knowledge) in Saskatchewan, Canada about Aboriginal culture and the importance of re-claiming a healthy sense of self for continued wellbeing. Nearly 5,000 product packages have been distributed to individuals, communities and organizations at no cost and the majority of the stories are also available on our website. Community Ambassadors have worked to gather the stories and facilitate the conversation throughout the project through community events, organizations and virtual spaces. Feedback to date has relayed that the stories are being used in multiple ways, among diverse audiences, and are having their intended impact.

Community Based Participatory Research with Indigenous People

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=RDCKDMX3>

Role models and leaders in Indigenous health research in Canada and the United States share their stories of work with First Nations and American Indian colleagues in community based research. Acknowledging the impact of history and resiliency while capturing the passion of emerging leaders in Indigenous health research, the videos provide a starting point for discussion on the roles and responsibilities of community and university partners in collaborative and community-based research. “The Partnership” video explores how Aboriginal communities are working with health researchers for the community’s benefit. Told through the eyes of Tlicho community-based researchers, “The Partnership” demonstrates that no matter what the issue, solutions always lie within the community. From the rural campus of the Northwest Indian College in Bellingham, Washington to the hustle of the University of Washington in Seattle, “Bridging Worlds” takes a look at the varying roles of American Indian post-secondary students. Reflecting on their own life journeys, three students discuss how their desire to participate in making decisions that affect their communities has inspired them to engage in community-based research. Dr. Rose James discusses the potential change generated by CBPR in the interface between community partners and leaders and members of post secondary institutions.

Interactive Focus Group Tools

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<http://ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=W64JY7FS>

This product is comprised of three tools aimed at collecting input from community members participating in a health-focused community based participatory research project. Two were inspired by The Evaluator’s Cookbook; permission was received by the publisher to share these tools in this publication. The third activity is an original creation. It was developed after implementing the first two activities in a cross cultural context and was initially used with First Nations children. These activities were piloted with a range of ages. Focus group participants were community stakeholders or direct program recipients. Participants responded positively to these activities, especially in cross-cultural projects where history, language, age, or education may create barriers between facilitators and participants. The activities create a non-threatening environment that fosters engagement and participation in data collection processes typically burdened by power differentials and language or cultural barriers. This may include children and youth, seniors, those for whom English is a second language, or other vulnerable populations who have difficulty expressing their opinions to facilitators they perceive as representatives of the dominant culture. These activities exemplify the principles of participatory evaluation; the tools were refined and created in collaboration with community members. The approach in the process and activities ensures that data collection is ethical, respectful of the research relationship, and mindful of the information collected through the activities.

Social Media as an Instrument for Youth Engagement with Antismoking Messages

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=5ZJFF7XB>

The "Youth smoking videos" are thought-provoking, entertaining, youth-focused videos which communicate antismoking messages in ways suitable to Aboriginal contexts and responsive to how youth seek information. Two videos were designed and produced by youth from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) communities of Ndilo and Dettah as part of a partnership between researchers at the University of Alberta's School of Public Health and the Chekoa Program, a holistic community-based program for YKDFN children and youth. Videos present effective antismoking messages relevant to young teenagers, particularly First Nation youth, and their communities. The Ndilo video presents three 'acts' with creative themes including a boxing match between healthy lungs and a cigarette. The video encourages viewers to 'say no' to cigarettes. The video produced by Dettah youth presents a moving re-enactment suggested by a story related by a Tobacco Health Promotion Specialist who spoke to the youth. This video highlights the strong addictive power of tobacco and its serious health consequences. Videos represent a unique way to engage YKDFN youth in antismoking messages through product creation and sharing of the videos both on an individual level and within YKDFN schools and communities. For example, the videos have been and will continue to be used at community events to showcase youth accomplishments and to promote smoking prevention/cessation. Given high levels of youth engagement with social media, the videos were also designed to influence the smoking decisions and behaviors of a broader youth and Aboriginal audience via YouTube.

CBPR Variable Matrix: Research for Improved Health in Academic/Community Partnerships

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<http://www.ces4health.info/find-products/view-product.aspx?code=FWYC2L2T>

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach that equitably involves partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each partner brings. CBPR begins with a research topic important to a community, combining knowledge construction, education, and action for social change towards improving community health. To advance community-engaged research, investigators from the Universities of New Mexico and Washington and the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, in collaboration with a National Advisory Board of academic and community experts,* created a variable matrix to support a conceptual logic model of CBPR processes and outcomes. Details on the creation of this model are found in Wallerstein et al. 2008 [1].¹ The variable matrix provides measurements to support the four dimensions of CBPR characteristics and relationships within each domain of the interactive CBPR model. First, contextual factors shape the nature of the research and the conditions under which partnerships can develop and be sustained. Next, group dynamics, consisting of three sub-dimensions, structural factors (i.e., collaborative agreements), individual partner characteristics, and relational dynamics (i.e., group decision-making); interact with contextual factors to co-produce the intervention and its research design. Finally, CBPR system changes and health outcomes result directly from the research. In sum, we provide items and scales from over 46 instruments representing 60% of 40 domains in the CBPR logic model.